

# LAND USE, OPEN SPACE, PUBLIC SERVICES & FACILITIES and RECREATION ELEMENTS



- INTRODUCTION
- ON THE USES OF LAND...

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OF THE  
CARSON GENERAL PLAN



CITY OF CARSON

CALIFORNIA

---

LAND USE, OPEN SPACE, PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

AND RECREATION ELEMENTS

OF THE

GENERAL PLAN

---

Prepared by the


COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

PLANNING DIVISION

Revised

May 17, 1982





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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	1
<u>PLANNING FRAMEWORK</u>	
Historical Background .....	2
Physical Setting .....	3
Population Characteristics .....	3
Economic Setting .....	5
Introduction .....	6
<u>LAND USE ELEMENT</u>	
Introduction .....	8
Data and Analysis .....	8
Land Use Policy .....	8
Goals and Objectives .....	8
Residential Land Use .....	9
Commercial Land Use .....	10
Industrial Land Use .....	12
Public and Quasi-Public Land Uses .....	13
Summary .....	13
<u>OPEN SPACE ELEMENT</u>	
Introduction .....	15
Goals and Objectives .....	17
Open Space Plan .....	19
Summary .....	21



## PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES ELEMENT

Introduction .....	23
Civic Center Complex .....	24
Goals and Objectives .....	25
California State University-Dominguez Hills .....	26
Summary .....	26

## RECREATION ELEMENT

Introduction .....	29
Goals and Objectives .....	30
Parks and Recreation Needs .....	31
Existing and Proposed Park Facilities.....	32
Summary .....	35





Planning Commission

and

City Council Actions

The Planning Commission at their October 27, 1981 meeting recommended certain amendments to the General Plan (Phase II) as set forth in Resolution Nos. 81-596 through 81-613.

The City Council at their December 11, 1981 meeting adopted Resolution No. 81-253 which amended the General Plan as outlined in these documents.

Further, the Planning Commission at their January 26, 1982, March 9, 1982, and March 23, 1982 meetings recommended certain amendments to the Land Use Element of the General Plan as set forth in Resolution Nos. 82-625, 82-628 and 82-631.

The City Council at their May 17, 1982 meeting adopted Resolution Nos. 82-076 and 82-077 which amended the Land Use Element as outlined in this document.



# THE GENERAL PLAN OF THE CITY OF CARSON, CALIFORNIA

## INTRODUCTION

Decisions related to the maintenance, future growth and revitalization of the City of Carson should be guided by an effective planning process, at the heart of which is a locally-adopted general plan. State law helps to shape this framework by requiring each city and county to prepare and adopt a general plan and by specifying its content and adoption procedures. More specifically, state law requires that nine distinct general plan elements be adopted covering the subjects of land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, seismic safety, noise, scenic highway and safety. Additional optional elements may be included at local discretion.

The General Plan of the City of Carson contains the nine mandated elements and some additional discretionary elements, all of which have been combined into five units grouped with elements having similar functions. These five units are:

1. **On the uses of land.....**, which combines the Land Use, Open Space, Public Services and Facilities, and Recreation Elements.
2. **On the movement of people and goods.....**, which combines the Circulation and Bicycle Facilities Elements.
3. **On protecting the health and safety of our citizens.....**, which combines the Safety, Seismic Safety and Noise Elements.
4. **On providing a suitable living environment.....**, which combines the Historical Preservation, Fine Arts, Conservation, Scenic Highways, Parkways and Raised Medians Elements.
5. **On providing decent housing and neighborhoods.....**, which sets forth the Housing Element.

The City is committed to affirmative action and equal opportunity in housing, employment, investment, service, protection and due process. No separate Element is required to set forth these basic and overriding social objectives. It is part of, and underscores, every Element contained in this General Plan.





## PLANNING FRAMEWORK

### Historical Background

The Carson area, which was submerged below the sea prior to the Upper Pleistocene period, was raised above sea level by the uplifting forces of volcanic activity, creating whole new land formations, including the geologic dome of Dominguez Hills. Over time, the accumulation of alluvial sediments raised the level of the land even further. Seismic faulting and ground movement, which led to the formation of marshes and shallow lakes, along with the continued accumulation of alluvial sediments resulting from the frequent flooding of the Los Angeles River, helped to shape the basic geology of Carson as we know it today.

Although there is evidence of early native American settlement in surrounding areas, such settlement presumably did not occur in the Carson area until after 1000 A.D. The natives in the area when the Spanish arrived in the late 1500s were the Tongva. Following the establishment of the San Gabriel Mission in 1771 and subsequent colonization by the Spanish, their settlements were destroyed.

The first private land grant in the area, known as Rancho San Pedro, was conveyed to Juan Jose Dominguez in 1784. This land grant covered some 75,000 acres and included what is now the City of Carson. The land was used primarily for cattle raising, which severely diminished the ground vegetation and further threatened the native Americans' customary way of life. Also, San Pedro harbor was flourishing by 1800, and the Carson area felt the effects of travel between the harbor area and Los Angeles along routes now comprising the Harbor Freeway and Wilmington Avenue.

The end of Mexico's rule, Statehood Admission in 1850 and the California gold rush increased the trade and commercial importance of the greater Los Angeles area leading to the county's opening of portions of such streets as Victoria, Dominguez Carson, Del Amo, Wilmington and Sepulveda. This also increased the development pressures in the Carson area.

Although surrounding areas were developing, the lack of available water delayed development of the Carson area until the establishment of the Dominguez Water Company in 1911. By this time, cattle ranching gave way to sheep grazing, which in turn was replaced by dairy farming. With the provision of water and other utilities, the Carson area began to urbanize. Initial residential development was in the Keystone neighborhood and commercial development was along Avalon Boulevard and Carson Street. Farming



slowly phased out as residential, commercial and industrial development occurred. The form of Carson was virtually set by 1968, the time of Carson's incorporation as a City.

Since its incorporation, the City has taken aggressive steps to enhance its physical environment and quality of life. Such steps include the adoption of the initial General Plan in 1971; initiation of two ambitious redevelopment projects to revitalize portions of the City in 1971 and 1972, leading to the development of the Carson Mall, Watson and Dunn industrial parks, City Hall and other commercial and industrial development; support for the continued growth of California State University-Dominguez Hills; and involvement in neighborhood planning, revitalization and housing rehabilitation through the ongoing community development program.

Carson today has emerged as one of the prominent cities in the South Bay area.

### Physical Setting

Carson is located in the southern portion of the Los Angeles basin, less than 20 miles south of downtown Los Angeles. The topography is flat with an elevation 20 to 30 feet above sea level, with the exception of Dominguez Hills in the northeast section which rises to a maximum height of slightly less than 200 feet. This is the only dominant physical feature in the City. Carson is surrounded by the cities of Torrance, Gardena, Compton, Long Beach and the City of Los Angeles, all of which are nearing full development capacity. Carson is approximately 80 percent developed and expects to reach its full capacity prior to the year 2000. The City is laterally bisected by the San Diego Freeway and the Dominguez Flood Control Channel, which constitute major man-made barriers. The proximity to the ocean provides the City with a temperate climate and cooling onshore breezes, the latter helping to minimize more serious smog problems.

### Population Characteristics

The 1980 population of Carson was 81,221 compared to 77,130 in 1970, and 78,657 in 1975. The 77,130 population figure included the Lincoln-Dominguez Village annexation territory which was later annexed in August, 1972. This represents a 5.3 percent increase during the decade. During this same decade, the number of housing units increased from 20,378 to 23,259, or 14.1 percent.





The difference in the rate of increase is attributable to the declining population per household. This is true not only in Carson but throughout the nation. The City's population per household in 1970 was 3.86 compared to 3.60 in 1975, or a decrease of 7.0 percent.

Carson has a rich cultural and economic diversity with a population comprised of a wide range of ethnic and racial backgrounds, including Whites of many nationalities, Blacks, Latinos, Orientals and Micronesians. The population composition is as follows:

	<u>Total Population</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Non-Hispanic White</u>	<u>Latino</u>	<u>Asian &amp; Other</u>
1970	77,130	8,764	45,051	16,020	7,295
1980	81,221	23,814	25,392	18,929	13,089

NOTE: The 1970 and 1980 race categories are derived from federal census data and are not strictly comparable.

There are many factors which will affect the future rate of growth in the City of Carson. Based on data and trends known in 1980, the population growth and projected population are as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Population</u>	<u>Population Added</u>	<u>Percent Changes</u>
1960	38,059	-----	-----
1970	71,150	33,091	86.9%
1972	77,130*	5,980	8.4%
1980	81,221	4,091	5.3%
1990(est.)	84,000**	2,779	3.4%
2000(est.)	88,000**	4,000	4.6%

\*The 1970 population figure of 71,150 was increased by 5,980 because the Lincoln-Dominguez Village area was annexed in 1972.

\*\*The 1990 and 2000 population figures are growth rates from the Southern California Association of Governments Document (1978) for the Carson area (RSA-19), which was applied to the 1980 census population base.



### Economic Setting

Since the City's incorporation, Carson has benefited from strong and diverse industrial and commercial development. This growth has occurred in three major areas: 1) increased industrial development due to the proximity of major freeways and the Port of Los Angeles; 2) development of the Carson Mall Regional Shopping Center; and 3) continued growth and expansion of major automobile dealerships. The presence of a state university within the City provides the advantage of a local source of highly trained and motivated employees and encourages the establishment of high technology business and industry.

While Carson will continue to have a strong economic base, new development will be at a decreased pace as the City reaches its build-out capacity.





## INTRODUCTION

### On the uses of land....

Land is a finite resource to be both used and protected. It is in the public interest to provide a framework for managing growth and community improvement which balances the need to accommodate private development of all types, to protect the environment and to protect areas which should remain open and undeveloped.

This over-riding goal must be set in the context of what already exists. Much of the land within Carson was developed long before the City was incorporated and, of course, before the development of the first comprehensive General Plan in 1971. While most of the land in Carson is developed, some is still vacant. Some of the developments were good and some were not so good, at least by contemporary standards. In any event, there is a need to guide the future development and improvement of the City and to protect needed open areas through the application of sound and modern planning principles.

In this unit, the policies and plans of the City of Carson regarding the uses of land are presented. Because they all relate to the use of land, the following four Elements are presented here together:

- Land Use and Open Space Elements which are required under state law.
- Public Services and Facilities Element and Recreation Element which were prepared under local option.



LAND USE  
ELEMENT



## LAND USE ELEMENT

### Introduction

The Land Use Element designates the proposed general distribution, general location and extent of the uses of land for residential, commercial, industrial, public and quasi-public activities. The proposed land use plan is long-range and is intended to provide a general framework for improvement and development in Carson over the next 15-20 years. It is specific enough to guide day-to-day development decisions, yet flexible enough to allow modification and continuous refinement.

### Data and Analysis

Information was collected and analyzed regarding the current use of land in the City. This included an identification and analysis of (a) existing land uses inventoried on a parcel-by-parcel basis, (b) functional land use groupings and relationships and (c) development and land use constraints, such as freeway and utility transmission corridors, rail lines, flood control channels and land-filling operations.

### Land Use Policy

As an overall policy guiding future development and improvement, the Land Use Element should be used by the City in seeking to build upon those factors that will provide a strong, stable economy which will strengthen and improve the quality of life of its citizens. More explicitly, an approach is necessary which balances the interests of both the public and private sectors and addresses the twin objectives of economic development and environmental protection.

As a matter of policy, because of the unique characteristics of the community and land use distribution, certain land uses are considered undesirable and are not permitted in the City (such as: flea markets, swap meets, active landfill disposal sites, etc.).

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Allow each type of land use sufficient area to develop to the fullest extent indicated by the economy and general welfare.





2. Separate nonconforming uses, replace substandard buildings and prevent deterioration of residential, commercial and industrial areas.
3. Provide a comprehensive guide for public improvement and private investment.
4. Provide a guide for continued development of a strong retail commercial center.
5. Improve development standards in order to control urban blight and protect property values.
6. Encourage the development of stable industrial and commercial uses which will broaden the economic base to create a more self-sufficient local economy.
7. Expand public community facilities in accordance with increasing population.
8. Plan for orderly future growth by updating and revising the General Plan whenever necessary.
9. Promote annexation of those areas originally within the Carson area prior to incorporation.

#### Residential Land Use

Areas designated as residential are the existing and proposed living areas of the City of Carson. To protect and enhance these areas, the following goals and objectives have been established:

1. Residential areas should be organized into distinct districts and located in harmonious relationship with other adjacent or nearby land use activities
2. Housing should be provided for a variety of income groups.
3. Residential areas should be served with schools, adequate parking, recreational parks and shopping areas in close proximity.
4. Residential areas should be protected from noise, odor, smoke and excessive traffic.



5. Realistic density standards should be established to ensure adequate space, light and safety.
6. Residential conflicts should be minimized by securing the abatement of nonconforming land uses.

Three residential sub-categories are included in the residential land use designations:

- Low Density. The low density residential areas are intended to provide for the establishment, expansion and preservation of single-family detached dwellings and such other activities considered harmonious with such low density residential development.

Standard: Maximum of eight dwellings per net acre.

- Medium Density. The medium density residential areas are intended to provide for the establishment, expansion and preservation of multiple dwelling units, single-family dwellings and such other activities considered harmonious with such medium density development.

Standard: Maximum of twelve dwelling units per net acre.

- High Density. The high density residential areas are intended to provide for multiple dwelling units, combinations of multiple- and single-family dwellings and such other activities considered harmonious with such high density development.

Standard: Maximum of twenty-five dwelling units per net acre.

### Commercial Land Use

Commercial areas are designated to accommodate the retail trade, office, finance and entertainment functions of the community. Specific goals and objectives include:

1. The Carson Mall and its peripheral areas should continue to serve as the major retail center in the City offering the widest range of goods and



services to the citizens of Carson and nearby communities. This regional shopping center, anchored on one side by the Civic Center complex and on the other side by California State University-Dominguez Hills, serves as a needed focal point for the City of Carson and links the northern and southern areas of the City.

2. Existing neighborhood and strip shopping areas should be strengthened through property rehabilitation, land use consolidation and elimination of nonconforming uses wherever possible.
3. Most commercial areas should be served with arterial highway access and all commercial businesses should have an adequate supply of parking.
4. Commercial activities should be screened or buffered from adjacent residential uses wherever possible.
5. Commercial activities should be encouraged to have a broader commercial base to develop a self-sufficient economy.
6. Minimize commercial land use conflicts by securing the abatement of nonconforming land uses.

The commercial designations include two sub-categories:

- Regional Commercial. The regional commercial district is intended to provide for the establishment, expansion and preservation of the City's primary comparison goods shopping center and its peripheral areas. This district offers the widest range of goods and services to the citizens of Carson and nearby communities.
- General Commercial. The general commercial districts, which include both general commercial and neighborhood commercial land uses serving highway-oriented commercial properties and smaller neighborhood shopping complexes, are intended to provide for the establishment, expansion and preservation of convenience retail shopping facilities which serve surrounding neighborhoods.





## Industrial Land Use

Industrial areas are designated to accommodate the manufacturing, processing, warehousing and distribution functions of the community. Specific goals and objectives include:

1. Heavy industrial areas should be separated from residential and commercial activities.
2. Light industrial areas and controlled industrial parks should be screened or buffered from adjacent residential, commercial or other heavier industrial areas.
3. All industrial areas should be served with adequate accessibility to transportation, utilities, public streets or highways and with adequate internal circulation, off street parking and loading and service facilities.
4. Appropriate pollution and environmental standards should be enforced.
5. Industrial businesses should be encouraged to provide broader based industries and provide greater diversity for economic stability.
6. The City should attempt to maintain the industrial areas mainly in the sections of the City presently designated for industrial land uses.
7. Industrial land use conflicts should be minimized by securing the abatement of nonconforming land uses.

The industrial designations include two sub-categories:

- Light Industry. The light industrial areas are intended to provide for the establishment, expansion and preservation of small- and medium-size industrial uses which are not likely to have adverse effects upon each other or upon neighboring residential and commercial zones. These light industrial areas should provide a buffer, wherever practical, between residential and/or commercial land uses and other heavier industrial uses, such as oil refineries, etc.



- Heavy Industry. The heavy industrial areas are intended to provide for the establishment, expansion and preservation of the full range of industrial uses which are acceptable within the community as a whole but whose operations require provisions for controlling adverse effects upon the more sensitive areas of the City. Heavy industry should be separated from residential and commercial uses.

### Public and Quasi-Public Land Uses

These land uses include the broad range of civic, governmental, institutional and utility uses in the City including parks, playgrounds, public building areas, public open spaces and utility transmission corridors.

### Summary

The Land Use Element includes a map indicating the existing and proposed land use designations of all property in the City of Carson.

The Land Use Element was originally approved by the City Council with the adoption of Resolution No. 71-181 on December 6, 1971. This Element was a portion of the original General Plan document, and there were numerous amendments to the original Element over the years that followed. The updated information contained in this new document is intended to supercede and replace that portion of the original General Plan document and all subsequent amendments in all aspects.



# OPEN SPACE ELEMENT





## OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

### Introduction

The Open Space Element for the City of Carson outlines the long-range proposals for preserving areas which are essentially unimproved and devoted to such open space uses as (1) the preservation of natural resources and scenic beauty, (2) the managed production of natural resources, (3) outdoor recreation and preserving wildlife habitats and (4) public health and safety. The Open Space Element addresses open space preservation on a comprehensive and long-range basis and, because of this broad scope, overlaps with other Elements contained in the General Plan, such as the Recreation and Conservation Elements.

Open space is any parcel or area of land or water which is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open space use and which is designated on a local, regional or state plan as any of the following:

1. Open space for the preservation of natural resources including, but not limited to, areas required for the preservation of plant and animal life, including habitats for fish and wildlife species, areas required for ecological purposes and other scientific study purposes, etc.
2. Open space used for the managed production of resources including, but not limited to, forest lands, agricultural lands, areas of economic importance for the production of food or fiber, areas containing major mineral deposits, etc.

In the City of Carson, the designated mineral deposits pertain to oil extraction in several areas of the community. In some cases, the oil wells are not located in industrially zoned districts and are operating under a legal nonconforming status.

3. Open space for outdoor recreation including, but not limited to, areas of outstanding scenic, historic and cultural value; areas particularly suited for parks and recreational purposes; etc.
4. Open space for public health and safety including, but not limited to, areas which require special management or regulation because of hazardous or special conditions (e.g., earthquake fault zones, unstable soil areas, flood plains, watersheds, areas



presenting high fire risks), areas required for the protection of water quality and water reservoirs, and areas required for the protection and enhancement of air quality.

The Open Space Element is limited in scope by the range of open space preservation opportunities which actually exist in Carson due, in large measure, to Carson's location, geography and industrial character. For example, an inventory made to identify parcels or areas of land or water to be considered for open space preservation discloses that:

- Carson has no rivers, bays, estuaries, coastal beaches, lakeshores or watersheds.
- Carson has no forests, rangelands, lakes or water areas for commercial fisheries.
- Carson has no areas of outstanding scenic or cultural value, no areas serving as links between major recreation and open space reservations and no scenic highway corridors.

This is not to say that Carson has no open space areas; in fact, there are numerous open space areas within the City of Carson. However, the type and character of open space falls into categories other than those listed above. These are:

- The linear areas formed by the utility easements throughout the City.
- The public rights-of-way in the City's major arterial street system.
- The parks and playgrounds comprising the City's parks and recreational system.
- The areas in the City still being devoted to agricultural use.
- The land-fill and reclamation areas in which organic materials have been deposited over the years. Many of these areas are unsuitable for development without significant corrective action to mitigate landfill gas and ground subsidence problems.

One important aspect of open space is recreation. In terms of recreational use alone, the importance of open space cannot be



understated. Over 70 percent of the population in the United States is now urbanized, and the trend is increasing. In addition, leisure time, salaries and mobility have steadily increased. Americans spend more hours enjoying recreational activities than ever before.

Within the context of the limited open space opportunities available, the following goals and objectives have been established to serve as a basis for the Open Space Element:

#### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Ensure protection and preservation of the City's open space and recreational land and provide open space throughout the City as equally and evenly as possible, particularly in potentially unsafe areas subject to such natural disasters as unstable soils, faulting, fire and flooding.
2. Provide for the managed production of resources, such as agricultural lands and areas of economic importance for the production of food and fiber, as long as it is economically feasible for them to operate in the Community.
3. Promote acquisition of land until adequate areas of open space for future park development have been assured.
4. Serve all age groups in the City through a cohesive parks and recreation system providing both active and passive recreation.
5. Ensure adequate future open space through use of zoning, acquisition and other means of land use control while, at the same time, not unduly infringing upon the development rights of private landowners.
6. Increase neighborhood open and recreational space, such as increasing open space requirements for multi-family dwelling units.
7. Beautify and utilize, on a lease basis when necessary, those areas currently used for utility easements in the most aesthetic and efficient manner, such as for open space parks and/or recreational purposes, etc.
8. Maintain existing street planting and maintenance programs for visual relief with emphasis placed on major





and secondary highways in residential and commerical areas.

9. Encourage school authorities to maintain a reasonable balance between landscaped and paved playground areas.
10. Encourage the planting and maintenance of landscaping along the Dominguez Channel right-of-way.
11. Encourage owners of vacant lots to maintain them in a neat and uncluttered manner, thus enhancing citizen pride in the community.
12. Encourage more comprehensive freeway landscaping programs and provide bicycle trails in the City.
13. Promote attractive landscaping on commercial and industrial developments and utilize landscaping buffers for screening incompatible land uses.
14. Initiate innovative programs to improve the open space-to-building ratio on public and private projects.
15. Improve urban form through review of zoning regulations pertaining to lot size, coverage, setbacks, parking and open space requirements, and work to minimize environmental hazards for public health and safety.
16. Coordinate the City's open space, recreation and natural corridors with neighboring local jurisdictions and regional organizations.
17. Encourage legislation, both state and federal, which increases open space funding of various types.
18. Maintain a program designed to review, obtain and efficiently utilize all available state and federal grants matching funds or subsidy programs to purchase and/or develop open space or recreational lands.
19. Ensure the City's continued economic well-being and increase property values by making it an attractive and suitable place to live, work, conduct business and be educated.



## OPEN SPACE PLAN

The open space plan for the City of Carson consists of the following components:

- Dominguez Channel. The Dominguez Channel is not formally included in the Open Space Element because it is privately, as well as publicly, owned and is not completely under the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District. However, it is recommended that the northwesterly portion of the Dominguez Channel (north of 223rd Street) be eventually utilized for bikeways, as presently proposed in the Bicycle Facilities Section of the General Plan. It is possible that the northwesterly portion could also be used for equestrian trails. It is proposed that regional agencies, including California State University-Dominguez Hills, be involved in these projects as part of an overall regional system of bikeways and trails.
- Landscaping of the Dominguez Channel has been proposed by the Flood Control District if the City were to agree to maintain the landscaping. This program should be encouraged in scheduled phases: for example, exposed intersections first then interior areas.
- Utility Easements. The utility right-of-way easements throughout the City should be utilized for the development of mini-parks, trails and greenbelts as part of the City's parks and recreation system. Lease arrangements may be required to implement this plan.
- Park Development Program. The City of Carson will continue to implement its parks and recreation program as outlined in the Recreation Element. This includes providing additional acreage to its park system which is supplemented by the existing Victoria Regional Park. The Victoria County Golf Course is established on a former landfill site and represents an alternate land use for a former landfill site.
- Natural Water Resources. The City of Carson is transversed by a small section of the Compton



Creek located in the easterly portion of the City. The Compton Creek is fenced to help prevent public intrusion and provides an excellent habitat for plant and animal life to exist in an otherwise industrial setting.

- Dedication of Land and/or Fees for Park Purposes.  
The City of Carson will continue to require the dedication of land and/or fees from developers of residential subdivisions. This will help to ensure future parks and open space areas for new subdivisions on the basis of the number of units per net acre.

The open areas devoted to agricultural uses (primarily field crops and nursery products) will likely continue to operate at the owner's discretion; however, it is anticipated that these areas (other than those which may be specifically reserved for park use) will eventually be developed in accordance with the land use designations in this General Plan.

Another means of ensuring open space and improved urban form is through zoning regulations and development standards. For example, interior landscaping at a ratio of two (2) percent is now required in all on-site parking areas where twenty (20) or more parking spaces are required. Adequate residential, commercial and industrial setbacks provide open areas, and landscaped raised center medians on highways and streets provide needed aesthetics. Realistic setbacks, landscaping and open space regulations in all zones are an acceptable and recognized means of improving the urban environment.

Legislation, both state and federal, has become increasingly concerned with environmental matters. The City should remain aware of legislation relating to open space and similar provisions and actively promote proposed beneficial legislation.

Possible state and federal grants are available in several categories relating to conservation, open space, parks, reclamation and environmental matters. These grants should be explored and actively pursued to help the City attain much needed recognition and financial support in the South Bay and Los Angeles basin for an aesthetic appearance and a healthy environment.

As discussed previously, the City has adopted the Conservation and Recreation Elements of the General Plan. The goals and objectives of these elements should be mandated as high priority items in the City's capital improvements program. With the several types of funding and grants available, the benefits will far outweigh the costs.





## Summary

The Open Space Element includes a map showing the existing and proposed sites utilized for open space purposes.

The City Council, with the adoption of Resolution No. 71-181, approved the original General Plan document on December 6, 1971, which included a Conservation Element and Parks and Recreation Element. These Elements were considered to be the "Interim Open Space Plan" for the City of Carson. The General Development Plan Map was also included in the original General Plan document and designated such public facilities as park sites, etc., some of which represent open space areas.

The Open Space Element was officially approved by the City Council with the adoption of Resolution No. 73-125 on July 2, 1973. The updated information contained in this new document is intended to supercede and replace the original document in all aspects.



PUBLIC SERVICES  
AND FACILITIES  
ELEMENT



## PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES ELEMENT

### Introduction

Since the incorporation of the City of Carson in 1968, it has been the goal of the City to provide the citizens with local services and facilities which are dispersed throughout the community to serve the residential neighborhoods, as well as the commercial and industrial areas. These facilities consist of public and quasi-public operations which are generally directly supported by public funding to serve the common good of the community. Some of the more prominent facilities are listed as follows:

- Schools. The Los Angeles Unified School District and Compton Unified School District presently provide nineteen elementary, junior and senior high schools. School sites are being provided in proportion to population. There are also several private schools in the City.
- Colleges. California State University - Dominguez Hills will enroll in excess of 20,000 students. This vast campus, located in the City of Carson, provides ample opportunity for enrollment of local youths and adults, a source of highly trained employees for City businesses and industries, and a wide range of cultural opportunities for all Carson residents.
- Water. Water is provided by the Dominguez Water Corporation and the Southern California Water Company. Present adequate service will be increased on an as-needed basis.
- Parks. Recreational parks are located throughout the City. There are presently eighteen existing and proposed facilities in the Community. In addition, the proposed Olympic Velodrome at California State University-Dominguez Hills will provide scheduled access for recreational and personal fitness use.
- Libraries. The Los Angeles County Library has three local branch and regional facilities in the City which adequately serve the projected population. There are also additional libraries throughout the City in smaller leased buildings located in commercial shopping areas. These facilities





serve local neighborhoods and supplement the main library branch system as the need arises.

- Fire. The Los Angeles County Fire Department currently has four stations serving the City.
- Golf Course. The County of Los Angeles operates the Victoria County Golf Course which provides a large regional facility conveniently located in the center of the City. In addition, the City also has a privately-operated golf course off Main Street, south of the San Diego Freeway.
- Olympic Velodrome. A 2,000 seat, 333 meter Velodrome to be constructed at California State University-Dominguez Hills for the 1984 Olympics will provide recreational and competitive cyclists with the only permanent world class tract in western North America. The facility is expected to host national and international competitions on a regular basis.

### Civic Center Complex

Down through the ages the thought has been that municipal buildings are a symbol of liberty and free government, and in particular, that the City Hall is a symbol of our democratic institutions because it is the foundation upon which all such institutions rest.

After incorporation, it was quickly determined that a City Hall and Civic Center were needed for a variety of reasons. It provides a sense of community identity, centralizes governmental services to the citizens, demonstrates to neighboring cities the progressive and independent spirit of the citizens of Carson, indicates to nearby unincorporated areas the desirability of annexation to Carson, provides a unifying force of giving the community a worthy goal to strive toward, becomes the showplace of our efforts to beautify our environment and sets the cultural and architectural tone for the City.

A citizens committee appointed by the City Council recommended the development of a Civic Center complex to achieve this goal. After evaluating locational accessibility and size requirements, a triangular site bounded by Avalon Boulevard, Carson Street and the San Diego Freeway was studied for the Civic Center. Ample land adjacent to this site was available for a future,



comprehensive business district, which could be attracted by the Civic Center complex (e.g., law offices, restaurants, banking and other financial institutions, engineering contractors, hotels and motels).

In order to achieve the Civic Center complex with the maximum benefits at minimum costs, the following goals and objectives were considered in the selection process:

#### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Provide a Civic Center complex accessible and convenient for residents and surrounding communities.
2. Create a focal center to further community identity and architecturally represent the City's Spanish heritage, with Spanish tile roofs and adobe-type facades to be utilized in the design of the Civic Center facilities.
3. Provide a site which would allow space for a City Hall and related activities, i.e., county offices, federal offices, court buildings, law enforcement offices and jail, and community center. The site should serve the needs of the community both present and future.
4. Ensure that the site is such that the surrounding area and land uses are, or will be, compatible to the public use concept of the Civic Center for the mutual benefit of the community.
5. Provide a site which is highly accessible by two major arterial streets and by good connections with both the San Diego and Harbor Freeways.
6. Provide a site which is adjacent to the major shopping, office and commercial centers of the City.
7. Provide a site which would minimize total cost through ease of acquisition and lack of extensive clearance, grading or installation of utilities.

The Civic Center complex, which stands as a symbol of community pride, is substantially developed today in a Spanish motif with tile roof and adobe-type facades which are the architectural standards for development in the area.

The Carson Post Office and the County of Los Angeles Sheriff's Station are constructed to the north of the City Hall. The



Carson Community Building is under construction and will contain numerous facilities, such as kitchens, game room, meeting rooms, offices, atrium, classrooms, craft rooms, lounge, child care facilities and service yard for the maintenance of the building.

### California State University-Dominguez Hills

One of the major land use characteristics of the City is the 346-acre campus of California State University-Dominguez Hills. Established prior to the City's incorporation, the university provides unparalleled educational, cultural and research advantages for persons residing and working in Carson.

As one of the major public activity centers in the City, the university's 9,000 students, faculty and staff serve as catalysts for various kinds of growth and prosperity including an attractive community environment for establishing high technology businesses and industries. A university-oriented community can also be expected to draw residents who have no actual connection with the campus but who desire the atmosphere and opportunities associated with a university.

Together the university and the City can share in fostering the highest principals by encouraging diversity among ethnic, racial, cultural, social, religious and political groups. Over time, it is anticipated that a strong social, functional and visible relationship will evolve between the university and the City.

### Summary

The Public Services and Facilities Element includes a map which indicates the existing and proposed public and quasi-public facilities in the City. A list of these facilities is included with the map to identify the name and location of the sites for reference purposes.

The Public Utilities and Facilities Element was original, approved by the City Council with the adoption of Resolution No. 71-181 on December 6, 1971. This Element was a portion of the original General Plan document, but the name of the Element was changed to "Public Services and Facilities Element" in July, 1980. This updated information contained in the new document is intended to supercede and replace that portion of the original General Plan document in all aspects.

The Public Services and Facilities Element replaces and incorporates the Civic Center Element which was originally approved by



the City Council with the adoption of Resolution No. 70-112 on September 8, 1970. The Civic Center Element was amended in December, 1971. The updated information contained in this new document is intended to supercede the original Civic Center Element and the amendment in all aspects and incorporate this material as a section of the Public Services and Facilities Element.





# RECREATION ELEMENT



## RECREATION ELEMENT

### Introduction

The plight of parks and recreation in the United States becomes more serious and acute each year. As leisure time, salaries and mobility increase, the work-week declines. More Americans spend more hours enjoying recreational activities than ever before. Today, recreation areas are no longer luxuries or merely aesthetically pleasing, but they are necessities, specifically for the young who need a healthy involvement and perception with nature.

Providing play and green belt areas is not the only function of parks. Parks add depth, dimension, differentiation in city landscapes; increase residential values; provide proof of the city government's interest in the welfare and well-being of its citizens; enable a city to favorably compete in the eyes of businesses and industries seeking future sites; and engender citizen pride in the city, thus creating a more favorable total environment.

In 1969 and 1970, the City adopted the Interim Phase and Phase II of the Parks and Recreation Element. These documents established the "Recreation Element" in the City of Carson and provided the research and background information to establish a strong and effective parks and recreation program. The objectives of these initial documents were to assess current park facilities, recommend adequate park sites for development in accordance with current and projected population figures, select suitable park sites, determine feasibility of acquisition and establish a suitable priority schedule.

These documents, which constituted the original Parks and Recreation Element and the subsequent amendments to the documents in the years that followed, have served the City well. The Parks and Recreation Department has utilized this background information and developed an extensive system of parks and associated facilities to serve the needs of the entire community. The recreation system consists of sites, facilities and a variety of programs which perform several important functions. The most basic function is the provision of recreational services to local residents with opportunities for a wide range of leisure time experiences.

The primary focus of the Recreational Element is to provide a parks and recreational system which satisfies the recreational



and leisure-time needs of the residents of Carson. To achieve this, the following goals and objectives have been established:

#### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Encourage citizen participation in parks and recreation activities and develop new recreational facilities and programs which respond to the specific needs and desires of local residents.
2. Determine the needs of current and future populations for outdoor activities and provide adequate active and passive parks and recreational facilities for the community.
3. Program facilities and activities for all age groups.
4. Inventory the existing and potential supply of recreational resources and programs and encourage public involvement in the creation of new plans and programs as necessary.
5. Ascertain existing and future recreational deficiencies by relating anticipated supplies to anticipated demand.
6. Coordinate the plan with surrounding jurisdictions, including county and state agencies as appropriate.
7. Maintain the local park system in order to complement the regional park facilities provided by Los Angeles County.
8. Encourage maximum utilization of the existing parks and recreational facilities and easy accessibility from residential areas to parks and recreational facilities.
9. Utilize the utility transmission corridors for low-intensive recreational uses wherever possible.

One of the major aims of the Recreation Element has been the proper selection of park sites for the construction of new facilities or the expansion of existing sites. The following criteria should be utilized in the evaluation of potential sites:

- Accessibility. It should not be necessary for citizens to cross major arterials to reach the local neighborhood parks. The location of local parks should be central to the population they are to serve and within one mile, preferably one-half mile, walking distance.





- Size and shape of parcels. Large square-shaped parcels rather than long, narrow parcels facilitate the task of park planning, especially in the case of baseball, softball and soccer/football fields. A minimum size of five acres is desired and prevents squeezing or skimping on facilities.
- Compatibility of land uses. Mixture of various land uses should be avoided wherever possible. Parks should be located in residential areas.
- Cost of acquisition. Cost is an important factor, and where more than one site is equally desirable and available, it should be the determinant.
- Typical Park Facilities. Should include:
  - o Playlot and mother's area
  - o Play area for school-age children
  - o Nature, science and hobby area
  - o Paved area for multi-purpose court games
  - o Family picnic area
  - o Park-like area for free play
  - o Baseball diamond
  - o Quiet area
  - o Senior citizen recreational facilities
  - o Landscaping, where appropriate

### Parks and Recreation Needs

Basic minimum standards were established to help measure the adequacy of the local recreational system. These standards established guidelines of ten (10) acres of recreational facilities per 1,000 people and considered the type and number of local and regional facilities for different kinds of parks, service areas and other system components, such as the utilization of public school grounds for auxiliary recreational facilities.

Park standards are for guidance only. Many communities strive to exceed recommended standards while others find them impossible to meet. Additionally, such standards should be reviewed periodically to reflect the changing population per household. However, they do provide a target for most communities and are a useful first step in assessing local systems.



## Existing and Proposed Park Facilities

Presently, the Parks and Recreation Department operates twelve park facilities, and five additional parks are proposed for construction. The County of Los Angeles operates one regional park and a golf course. The sites vary in acreage as noted below:

<u>Facilities</u>	<u>Approximate Acreage</u>
Existing Parks (City of Carson)	88.6 Acres
Proposed Parks (City of Carson)	64.0 Acres
Victoria Regional Park (County of Los Angeles)	36.0 Acres
Victoria County Golf Course (County of Los Angeles)	161.6 Acres

Victoria Park is a Los Angeles County regional park facility which includes approximately 36.0 acres devoted to play area, a recreation building, four ballfields, basketball area, swimming pool, gymnasium, four tennis courts and a picnic area. The park is located on both sides of East 192nd Street. A 161.6 acre public golf course is located to the southeast of the County Victoria Regional Park.

The City of Carson currently operates twelve local recreational parks. These parks collectively contain a wide range of recreational facilities including baseball diamonds, soccer/football fields, basketball courts, children's play areas, game courts, activity buildings, picnic areas, administrative and maintenance facilities.

Public schools can also play a key role in providing local recreational services. School yards of the nineteen public schools in Carson (two high schools, three junior high schools and fourteen elementary schools) may be utilized for active recreational purposes, especially at the neighborhood level, providing an additional opportunity for recreational facilities. The Parks and Recreation Department should investigate the potential benefits of negotiating mutual agreements with the school districts and the City for the public utilization of school property for recreational purposes, on a case by case basis.



The City of Carson is proposed to be served with public park land as follows:

<u>Park Site</u>	<u>Approximate Acreage</u>
1. Malloy/Galaxy West/Centerview Park Site (Proposed) .....	10.8
2. Walnut Street Park .....	0.7
3. Stevenson Park .....	11.7
4. Victoria Regional Park and Swimming Pool .....	36.0
5. PFC. James Anderson, Jr., Memorial Park .....	8.5
6. Heritage Park .....	5.1
7. Del Amo Park .....	9.5
8. Dolphin Park .....	11.8
9. Dominguez Park .....	6.9
10. John D. Calas, Sr., Memorial Park .....	8.7
11. Carson Park and Swimming Pool .....	10.9
12. Friendship Park .....	0.3
13. Moine Tank Farm Park Site (Proposed) .....	12.1
14. General Winfield Scott Park and Swimming Pool.	11.2
15. Carriage Crest Park .....	3.4
16. Southern Green Belt Park (Proposed) .....	28.4
17. Northern Green Belt Park (Proposed) .....	7.8
18. Dolores Street Park Site (Proposed) .....	<u>4.8</u>
	188.6 Acres



The present parks and recreation program provides approximately 188.6 acres of land for local and regional parks. This equates to approximately 2.3 acres of park facilities per 1,000 people in the City of Carson. This is based on the 81,221 population figure as established by the 1980 Census. The Victoria County Golf Course is not included in this ratio; therefore, an additional 161.6 acres is provided for public golfing purposes.

In order to maintain its tradition as a strong residential community, Carson should strive to continue a high quality parks and recreation system. However, it will be difficult for the City to meet past recommended standards for parkland. Although Carson is not yet built-up, available land suitable for recreation is limited. Therefore, it is proposed that the basic recreational park system for the City of Carson has been established and the main emphasis in the years to come will be a concentration of effort to improve existing parks with additional facilities.

It is, therefore, important to use the existing parks and recreation system most effectively. The overall shortage of parkland can be partially offset by intensifying the use of existing parks. New facilities could be developed on existing sites, program offerings could be expanded and cooperative arrangements between the City and the schools could be developed. The recreational potential of existing open areas, such as the utility transmission corridors and landfill sites, should be evaluated. In addition, the City should try to capture small new park sites as part of larger residential development projects that may occur.

Recommended park and recreational improvements for the City of Carson include:

Los Angeles County should be encouraged to expand Victoria Park or construct additional facilities in the City if it is determined to be feasible.

Additional neighborhood parks, including mini-parks and tot-lots, should be developed in neighborhoods where parkland is deficient.

Needed facilities should be provided in existing parks.





## Summary

The Recreation Element includes a map showing the existing and proposed sites utilized for recreational park facilities.

The Interim Parks and Recreational Element was originally approved by the City Council with the adoption of Resolution No. 69-101, on August 11, 1969. The Element was expanded by the City Council on February 1, 1971, with the adoption of Resolution No. 71-018 which added Phase II of the Parks and Recreation Element to the General Plan. Subsequently, there have been numerous amendments to the original documents which have modified the Parks and Recreation Element. The name of the Element was changed to "Recreation Element" in July, 1980. The updated information contained in this new document is intended to supercede and replace the original documents and all subsequent amendments in all aspects.



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